

MALTINGS ACADEMY

PARENT COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES 16 September 2009

Members:

Vera Bull	VB	No
Pauline Davies	PD	No
Alan Foskew	AF	Yes
Sue Goodman	SG	No
Wendy Groves	WG	No
Mandy Haines	MH	No
Sue Hayrettin	SH	No
Sandi Jenkinson	SJ	No
Patricia Jones	PJ	Yes - Chairperson
Linda Mason	LM	Yes
Clair McKeown	CM	No
Debbie Murfitt	DM	No
Darren Smith	DS	Yes - Secretary
Daren White	DW	Yes
Vanessa Way	VW	No
Anita Mason	AM	No
Gavin McCall	GM	Yes
Trevor Allen	TA	Yes

Present:

01. Apologises for Absence

Vera Bull, Mandy Haines, Sue Hayrettin, Wendy Groves, Debbie Murfitt

02. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Minutes of the meeting of the 9 July 2009 were confirmed and accepted by the meeting as a true record.

03. Vice Chairperson nominations and vote

Following last meetings note on the vacant position of the Vice Chair, the secretary had not received any positive comments / nominations – see later in the minutes for further comments.

04. Points arising from previous minutes

- a) PJ has produced a letter in relation to absence that will be forwarded to DW and the Principal prior to formal issuing to all in the council and parents alike following DW's recent comments about absence and the effect that missing 1 lesson a week can have over the students academic career.

05. Review of the Parent Council Year

a) Communication

The primary issue that concerned the Parent Council in the Academic Year 2008/9 was the communication between the Academy and the Parents. This took the form of many guises and the overwhelming thought of the PC was that the communication in its current formats of IPR's and Target Setting was not sufficient for the Parents to fully understand the progress of their children.

The PC requested from the Senior Management Team (SMT) and Mr O'Sullivan for a reinstatement of Parents Evenings, the Principal explained that Parents Evenings were not a productive means of transmitting information as effectively only 40% of parents attended and it tended to be those parents that were already in communication with the Academy.

The PC then discussed various methods of the Academy and in particular the SMT communicating with the Parents, where we finally came up with the idea of an "Open Evening – Subject Specific Evening", where the Subject heads and teachers of 2-3 subjects only had an open evening for a period of 3 hours each term (the subject rotating across the board over the Academic year), the format as prescribed by the PC was not wholly accepted by the SMT, but a variant of this has been and this will be trialled on the 13th October 2009 (note there will be a PC Meeting thereafter on the 13th at 7.45pm to review)

b) Parents to help with Academy trips

This is an issue that has recently been in the news, the Academy have confirmed that where Parents / Guardians can help out on a regular basis then the academy will pay for the CRB check, however, if a parent/guardian will only help once, then the cost of the check is prohibitive unless a parent/guardian wishes to fund it themselves. It was confirmed that the cost of staff being placed on trips and supply staff engaged is £150 per day per staff member.

c) Parents involved in Student learning

This item was scheduled for discussion, but the timetable didn't allow time for this to be discussed in any detail and will be championed this academic year. However, for the minutes it should be recorded that a student will spend 75% of his life during their schooling outside the Academy.

d) Contacting the Academy

The ability to contact the Academy and teaching staff in particular has greatly improved over the course of the first year, with email addresses and telephone numbers being released. The Website needs to be updated with this information and the PC members have been asked to comment on the user-ability of the website for feedback, to date this has not been tasked.

e) Attendance Issue

DW gave an insight in to the percentage attendances for missing one lesson, one afternoon regularly – the PC is championing this issue in the forthcoming Academic year, with the first issue of a formal letter from the PC.

f) Link with the Governors

The PC attended a Governors meeting when it was first set up, nothing since then has taken place. Our previous link with the Governors was Trevor Allen, who was a parent, Gavin McCall who is our current link, is not the "Parent Governor", but has

represented the PC well at the Governors meetings. It is noted that whilst GM has put forward comments from the PC, that the PC does not have a slot/agenda item on the Governors meetings. It is felt that the PC and the Governors do need to foster closer links and this will be an issue to be championed for the coming year.

g) “Friends of John Bramston School”

The FJBS was disbanded when the Academy was born, the principals behind the friends decided that they had run their course with it and that if someone else wanted to take over they could, otherwise it would cease to be in existence, however, the bank account remains in place. DW would like to see the Friends rise from the ashes like a Phoenix to become the Friends of Maltings Academy. This is any issue for the forthcoming year to be put forward under the guidance of the PC with it's own Agenda slot.

06. Election of Parent Council Positions

The Constitution of the PC calls for the election each September of a Chair and Vice Chair, as well as the Secretary's positions.

The position of Vice Chair Person has been vacant for several months and needs to be filled. Furthermore, the Chair – Patricia Jones, advised the meeting that she would be stepping down from the position of Chairperson – The secretary on behalf of the Parent Council congratulated and thanked Patricia on her stewardship of the Parent Council during the Academic year in which some taxing and delicate issues were discussed and resolved, Patricia advised the meeting that whilst she was stepping down as Chair she will be on the back benches as a committed member of the council.

At this moment, the Secretary advised the meeting, that he would be stepping down too from his position, in this moment of self congratulation amongst ourselves, the Chair thanked the Secretary for his work, on what was perceived to be the hardest job on the Council and for his excellent record of minutes, the secretary blushed!

Therefore, three positions were put to the meeting as being vacant, the Vice Chair and Chair are voted on by the meeting should more than one candidate come forward, the Secretary is normally a willing volunteer.

No one came forward, therefore, the Chair and Secretary have agreed to stay in place until the meeting of the 13th October, where they will open the meeting and the election will be first agenda item.

Alan Foskew and Trevor Allen, have both expressed comment that if no one else steps forward they would dependent on outside commitments step in to the breach, however, this is not for certain and therefore, all parents both currently active on the council and not are asked to consider the positions and if felt put themselves forward.

“Rallying Cry”

The Council needs to move forward from the excellent base so far set by the current active members, it needs more active membership for it to be a valid voice in the education of all students in the Academy, therefore, it is important that parents step up to the plate – it is only once a half term!

07. Any Other Business

a) Work Experience

DW advised the meeting that he is now involved in the 6th form and that one of his responsibilities is "Work Experience Placements". He has asked for parents with the ability to take work experience students to come forward and offer themselves, they will probably have to go via Trident once confirmed. Also, he commented on the position of Parents being proactive in allowing their child to undertake Work Experience, anecdotal evidence of parents stopping their child attending due to having to travel more than a couple of miles, getting the train, more than one bus"

b) Aims and Objectives for 2009/10 (see previous comments above too)

Bullying - What is Bullying?

PC to take on board this issue, so far to date, only 1 Year 7 student has experienced bullying – DW is going to involve the Student Council too, to define the rules and regulations and sanctions in respect of Bullying.

c) Links with other Academies in the Trust

Greenstead and New Rickstones (post meeting note, new Academy as part of Trust at Clacton)

There is current interaction at 6th form level, outside of that there is not a huge amount, it is perceived that they don't have a Parent Council. All three current academies attended the Academy Conference at Chelsea FC and the Show Theatre Conference.

Suggested that once the "Friends" is reinvented that the other Academies should be invited to a Quiz night.

It is pleasing to note that the "inter-school" rivalry between Rickstones and the old JBS has disappeared.

09. Date of next meeting

There is to be an Open Evening on 13th October 2009, thereafter on 13th October at 7.45pm there will be a PC Meeting in the staff room with 2 agenda items only;

- 1) Election of Positions as minuted above
- 2) Review of the Open Evening

The meeting will be a maximum of 45 minutes.

Meeting formally closed at 8.10pm.